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Amendments to the Claims

The following listing of claims will replace all prior versions and listings of claims in the application.

1-10 (Canceled)

11. (Currently amended) A backing plate for use in a friction assembly for a brake, the friction assembly comprising a brake pad which includes the backing plate and a friction material, the backing plate comprising:

a friction supporting surface for supporting the friction material for producing friction when the brake is in use;

a back surface opposite to the friction supporting surface, the back surface being adapted to receive a noise damping shim; and

a first coupler member formed on the back surface for engaging with a second coupler member formed on the noise damping shim and having a rim defining a hole to couple the noise damping shim with the backing plate, the first coupler member having:

a stem adapted to be received in the hole of the second coupler member, the stem having a connection end where the stem is connected to the backing plate and a distal end opposite to the connection end;

a recess surrounding the stem to accept the rim of the second coupler member, wherein the distal end of the stem is within the recess.

12. (Currently amended) The backing plate as claimed in claim 11, wherein the stem has a height between the connection end and the distal end;

the recess has a depth defined by an opening mouth and a bottom;

wherein the height of the stem is less than the depth of the recess such that the distal end of the stem remains within the recess [the first coupler member has a stem that is received in a hole defined by the second coupler member].

13. (Canceled)

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14. (Currently amended) The backing plate as claimed in claim 12, ~~[13,]~~ wherein the stem of the first coupler member has an enlarged section having a larger-cross section ~~[adjacent to a]~~ positioned near the distal end of the stem such that the enlarged section engages the rim ~~[of the stem of the first coupling member mates with a larger section of the hole]~~ of the second coupler member to prevent disengagement of the shim from the backing plate after assembly.

15. (Original) The backing plate as claimed in claim 14, wherein the stem of the first coupler member is deformed to form the enlarged section.

16. (Currently amended) The backing plate as claimed in claim 14, wherein the enlarged section of the stem of the first coupler member is pre-formed on the stem prior to coupling with the second coupler member.

17. (Currently amended) A method of assembling a friction system for a brake, the method comprising the steps of:

providing a first coupler member having a stem and a recess surrounding the stem on a back surface of a backing plate for a friction assembly such that a distal end remains within the recess, the friction assembly having:

a friction pad for producing friction when the brake is in use; and

[a] the backing plate having a friction supporting surface for supporting the friction pad and [a] the back surface opposite to the friction supporting surface ~~[, the first coupler member located on the back surface of the backing plate]~~;

providing a second coupler member having a rim defining a hole on a noise damping shim, the noise damping shim having a first surface adapted for engagement with the back surface of the backing plate, and a second surface adapted for receiving a compression force when the brake is in use;

coupling the second coupler member ~~[provided on the noise damping shim]~~ with the first coupler member ~~[provided on the back surface of the backing plate]~~ by engaging the stem with

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the rim so as to couple the shim with the backing plate, wherein the distal end of the stem remaining within the recess of the backing plate after coupling.

18. (Currently amended) The method as claimed in claim 17, wherein the coupling step couples the first coupler member and the second coupler member by accepting the distal end of the stem of the first coupler member within the hole of the second coupler member, and deforming the distal end of the stem after coupling [a rivet].

19. (Currently amended) The method as claimed in claim 18, wherein:

~~[the step for providing the first coupler member provides a stem on the back surface of the backing plate; and~~

~~the step for providing the second coupler member provides a rim defining a] the hole of the second coupler member has a portion with an enlarged cross-section; and [for accepting the stem of the first coupler member; and]~~

the coupling step comprises the steps of:

 mating the first coupler member with the second coupler member so that the stem of the first coupler member is accepted in the hole of the second coupler member; and

 deforming the stem ~~[to secure]~~ such that the deformed section of the first coupler member is secured by the rim of [with] the second coupler member in the portion of the hole having the enlarged section.

20. (Currently amended) A method of assembling a friction system for a brake, the method comprising the steps of:

providing a first coupler member having a stem having a region with an enlarged cross-section, and a recess surrounding the stem on a back surface of a backing plate for a friction assembly, the friction assembly having:

a friction pad for producing friction when the brake is in use; and

the backing plate having a friction supporting surface for supporting the friction pad and the back surface opposite to the friction supporting surface;

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providing a second coupler member having a rim defining a hole on the noise damping shim, the noise damping shim having a first surface adapted for engagement with the back surface of the backing plate, and a second surface adapted for receiving a compression force when the brake is in use; and

snapping in the enlarged section of the stem of the first coupler member into the hole of the second coupler member so that the enlarged section of the stem engages the rim of the hole to couple the shim with the backing plate [~~The method as claimed in claim 17, wherein the coupling step couples the first coupler member and the second coupler member by a snapping in action~~].

21. (Currently amended) The method as claimed in claim 20, wherein:

~~[the step for providing the first coupler member provides a stem on the back surface of the backing plate, the stem having an enlarged section adjacent to a free end of the stem; and]~~

the step for providing the second coupler member provides ~~[a rim defining a]~~ the hole with an enlarged section ~~[for accepting the stem of the first coupler member;]~~ and

the ~~[coupling]~~ snapping step ~~[snaps]~~ forces the enlarged section of the stem of the first coupler member into the enlarged section of the hole of the second coupler member so that the enlarged section of the stem of the first coupler member secures the coupling between the first coupler member and the second coupler member.

22. (New) The method as claimed in claim 20, wherein:

the step of providing the first coupler member forms the stem such that a distal end of the stem remains within the recess .